

development resources to job seekers and local businesses. Grifols hires interns from the Center who have completed their certificate program in technology. In addition, the company interviews all graduates of the program to provide them with valuable, real-world experience.

Grifols presence in the U.S. was greatly enhanced this year by the acquisition of Talecris Biotherapeutics. This transaction, valued at almost \$5 billion, is the largest acquisition ever completed by a Spanish company in the U.S. Grifols is now the world's largest collector of human plasma, the third largest manufacturer of plasma protein therapies globally, and the leading plasma manufacturer in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, the Spain-U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the leading forum for the promotion of commercial, economic and industrial relations between Spain and the United States. Founded in 1959 and based in New York City, the Chamber is a non-profit organization dedicated to fostering economic outreach between the two countries.

The Chamber honored Mr. Grifols at its annual gala dinner in Manhattan on December 6th. The U.S. Ambassador to Spain, the Spanish Ambassador to the U.S., and the Spanish Minister of Culture joined over 250 guests in recognizing Mr. Grifols Roura's commitment to fostering expanded economic and social ties between the U.S. and Spain.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Victor Grifols Roura for his outstanding leadership of Grifols and for his well deserved honor as 2011 Business Leader of the Year by the Spain-U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

TRIBUTE TO COACH ANDREW TRENKLE AND THE MAINE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL CONSTITUTION TEAM

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Coach Andrew Trenkle and the Maine South High School Constitution Team for their achievement in winning the Illinois State Title of the "We the People: the Citizen and the Constitution" competition. This extraordinary accomplishment marks the twentieth time in twenty one years that Maine South's team has won this title.

"We the People: the Citizen and the Constitution," a program sponsored by the Center for Civic Education, educates students on important issues including the purpose of government, the function of the Constitution, and the importance of citizen participation. Participants are encouraged to identify and communicate their own opinions, thereby developing strong skills in discussion, debate, and compromise. In the "We the People" competition, teams of students participate in simulated Congressional hearings, presenting statements and answering challenging questions about the United States Constitution. This year's victory of the 2011–2012 Maine South Constitution Team demonstrates their deep understanding of Constitutional principles as well as their aptitude for critical thinking and teamwork.

Congratulations to all the members of the 2011–12 team: Coach Andrew Trenkle, Paul Ansani, Jeremy Apolinski, Austin Bryniarski, Ethan Campbell, Colton Cannon, Claire Floriano, Merrill Hester, Luke Kopolnek, Lauren Krone, Renee Kumon, Jimmy Loomos, Thomas Lis, Meredith Machon, Caroline Murphy, Kyle Richardson, Michelle Roberts, Allie Sakowicz, Daniel San Gabino, Matt Sherbahn, Katie Solberg, Sarah Tarabey, Caroline Unger, Maddy Vogt, Patrick Wohl, Alex Zaug and Lindsey Zawila.

The United States of America was founded on the principles of civic involvement and responsibility. The students of Maine South High School have proven that they embody those principles and that they will grow to be passionate and capable future leaders. On behalf of the 9th Congressional District, I congratulate you on this outstanding achievement and wish you the best of luck at the National Competition in April 2012.

HONORING CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER NIAL FUNCHION

HON. DANIEL LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Officer Nial Funchion of the Chicago Police Department for his swim across the Strait of Gibraltar on October 6, 2011, and for his support of the Brotherhood for the Fallen, a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting the families of fallen police officers.

Officer Nial Funchion is an 18-year veteran of the Chicago police force and a trusted public servant. He first became involved in the Brotherhood of the Fallen following a funeral for a colleague killed in the line of duty. At that funeral, he noticed a group of uniformed police officers offering condolences to the family of the slain police officer. He was deeply moved by this kind gesture and contacted the Brotherhood for the Fallen to see how he could help.

Already a tremendous swimmer, Officer Funchion has since dedicated his swimming endeavors to the Brotherhood for the Fallen to raise public awareness for the organization. His most recent swim dedicated to the Brotherhood was perhaps his most impressive. He crossed the 12 miles separating Spain and Morocco, known as the Strait of Gibraltar, in three hours and fifty minutes. Not only did Officer Funchion brave rough waters to complete his swim, but he did so while being followed by a family of orca whales.

Officer Funchion plans to add to his swimming accomplishments by completing endurance swimming's Triple Crown. Over the next two years he intends to complete the 28.5 mile loop around Manhattan Island and the 21 mile swim across the Catalina Channel in southern California. He previously crossed the English Channel in 1992 with the fastest time by an American that year. I applaud Officer Funchion for protecting our community, performing amazing feats to help others, and supporting the Brotherhood for the Fallen, and I wish him safety and calm waters in his coming endeavors.

TRIBUTE ON THE PASSING OF OFIELD DUKES

HON. HANSEN CLARKE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I honor the life and legacy of Ofield Dukes, a public relations pioneer, long-time friend of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), and fellow Detroit. Mr. Dukes was firmly committed to fighting for justice and equality for all people.

Mr. Dukes, an Army veteran, graduated from Detroit's Wayne State University with a degree in journalism. After graduation, he worked at The Michigan Chronicle, a weekly African American-run newspaper based in Detroit, until he moved to Washington D.C. in 1964 to work for the federal government.

Mr. Dukes served as the deputy director of public affairs at Lyndon B. Johnson's Office of Equal Employment Opportunity. From 1966 to 1968, Mr. Dukes was a communications advisor to Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey.

Mr. Dukes founded his public relations firm, Ofield Dukes & Associates, in 1969. The firm focuses on political and minority affairs with a focus on African-American and African issues. Mr. Dukes' first client was Detroit's Motown Records. Today, Ofield Dukes & Associates represents the Democratic National Committee, Howard University, The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, and the Congressional Black Caucus, among other notable clients.

Mr. Dukes' relationship with the Congressional Black Caucus dates back to its founding in 1971 when he helped organize the first Congressional Black Caucus dinner. Mr. Dukes also served as an advisor to several CBC chairpersons. He was a founding member of the CBC Foundation, served on the Foundation Board for 14 years, and worked to improve the socioeconomic circumstance of African-Americans around the nation.

Mr. Dukes also spent his time reaching out to younger generations. He taught at the Howard University John H. Johnson School of Communications for 25 years and American University's School of Communications for 8 years, inspiring hundreds of African-American students to pursue careers in public relations and politics.

Mr. Dukes' work ethic, dedication, and resilience embody the spirit of Detroit. In October 2011, Mr. Dukes returned to his hometown of Detroit, Michigan because of his love for the city, family, and friends. After a struggle with bone cancer, Mr. Dukes passed away on December 7, 2011. I am honored to call Mr. Dukes a friend and colleague. He will be greatly missed.

URGING TURKEY TO SAFEGUARD ITS CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

SPEECH OF

HON. RUSS CARNAHAN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 13, 2011

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on H. Res. 306, regarding religious

freedom in Turkey, a longtime friend and ally of the United States.

The value we in America place on freedom of religion goes to the very heart of American democracy, and we have a strong interest in promoting religious freedom globally. As with other indicators of democracy and human rights, nations that respect religious tolerance generally enjoy greater economic prosperity and social stability. While I support this resolution and encourage further progress on religious freedom in Turkey, I also believe we must seek to support these standards in an even-handed manner.

I would like to emphasize the importance of U.S.-Turkish relations. From Turkey's critical support in Afghanistan and elsewhere, as a uniquely positioned NATO ally and their substantial humanitarian contributions in response to famine in the Horn of Africa to Turkey's efforts in support of the Syrian people as the Assad regime's brutality intensifies, Turkey continues to be a strong partner in addressing some of the world's most vexing problems. As revolutionary calls for democratic governance sound throughout the Middle East and North Africa, we must continue to work closely with Turkey, whose position as a democratic, majority Muslim country can play a positive role in transitions in the region.

Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the positive steps that the Turkish government has taken to address issues of religious freedom and tolerance. This August, the Turkish government issued a decree inviting non-Muslims to reclaim churches and synagogues that were confiscated 75 years ago and has eased some citizenship requirements on Orthodox clergy. Unfortunately, H. Res. 306 omits recognition of these important commitments. While issues remain, particularly with regard to the Ecumenical Patriarch, I am encouraged by the efforts that have been made and hope for further progress.

As a member of the Congressional Caucus on Turkey and Turkish Americans, I look forward to the ongoing alliance between our countries.

IN RECOGNITION OF FRISCO FIRE CHIEF MACK BORCHARDT

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Fire Chief Mack Borchardt for his dedicated service to the Frisco Fire Department and to the people of the 26th Congressional District of Texas.

Chief Borchardt first became a volunteer Frisco firefighter in 1973; at that time, Frisco had an all-volunteer fire department. In November 1987, Chief Borchardt became Frisco's first fulltime fire chief. Through his leadership, diligence, and organization, the Frisco Fire Department now has more than 140 fulltime department members.

Under Chief Borchardt's leadership, the Frisco Fire Department has expanded to become an outstanding example to departments nationwide. They are one of the select few departments in the country that have an ISO 1 rating, which is a testament to their superior standards and procedures. The Frisco Town

Council recognized Chief Borchardt with a resolution proclaiming December 2011 as Aubrey "Mack" Borchardt Month in Frisco. His service to his community, society, and peers throughout the past 30 years is indeed an inspiration.

I am honored to represent the city of Frisco and many of its residents in the United States Congress. I, along with his family, friends, and the citizens of the 26th District celebrate his tireless commitment to his community. Please join me in recognizing and thanking this exceptional community leader for his selfless commitment to our society.

CONGRATULATING VALENCIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE, RECIPIENT OF THE 2011 ASPEN PRIZE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE EXCELLENCE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to congratulate Valencia Community College on earning the inaugural Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence. The Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence recognizes extraordinary accomplishments in community colleges, applauding those that serve as models for elevating community college education.

Valencia Community College was selected by the Aspen Institute after a competitive, year-long process during which 120 of the nation's top community colleges were judged based on student performance and graduation rates. Of Valencia Community College's full time students, more than half graduate or transfer within three years. This is well above the national average of 40%.

Founded in 1967 as Valencia Junior College, Valencia Community College's goal was to make its students successful, both in the classroom and in their personal and professional lives. Today, Valencia Community College is the third largest community college in Florida, educating more than 50,000 students each year.

This is not the first time Valencia has been recognized for excellence in education. Indeed, Valencia has a long history of national distinction. Valencia was recognized in 2009, with the inaugural Leah Meyer Austin Institutional Student Success Leadership Award; in 2007, by the New York Times as a leading community college; in 2001, by TIME Magazine as one of the nation's best schools at helping first-year students to excel; and in 1998, the National Alliance of Business named Valencia the Community College of the Year.

On behalf of the citizens of the State of Florida, I am pleased to congratulate Valencia Community College's President, Dr. Sanford Shugart, and Valencia Community College's Administration, Board of Trustees, and faculty for pursuing excellence in community college education, both nationally and as a critical part of Florida's education system. May their hard work and dedication inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

TO HONOR PFC BRENDAN MARROCCO, UNITED STATES ARMY, WITH A POEM: "STATEN ISLAND STEEL"

HON. MICHAEL G. GRIMM

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 15, 2011

Mr. GRIMM.

STATEN ISLAND STEEL

All in the shadow of liberty . . .
All in this most Gotham of all cities . . .
There grew up to be, one of our nation's finest sons so indeed . . .
As strong, as strong . . . as strong as can be!
Army Strong that's who he!
Whose heart and soul, makes our Lord so complete . . .
Whose courage so makes even the Angels up on high so weep!
Because . . .
Some Steel,
cannot so be crushed!
Some Steel,
will not so rust!
Some Steel,
cannot so be bent!
Some Steel . . .
cannot so be broken!
As if this Steel was Heaven sent!
All in how,
his heart of Steel has so spoken . . .
So very deep down inside,
all in what Rocco is invoking . . .
That which so brings such tears to eyes . . .
Which against all odds somehow kept hope alive!
To So Teach Us . . . To So Reach Us . . . To So Beseech Us!
Because, The Greatest Steel In This World . . .
Comes from Staten Island, my little boys and girls . . .
Yea, The Stronger than anything known to man!
Staten Island Steel . . .
Move over Superman, you're just a comic book . . . Rocco is real!
And Batman this is not your city anymore!
Brendan Marrocco, "Rocco" . . . Aka . . . Staten Island Steel!
Because, Rocco you have the word hero stamped all across your chest!
As you Rocco put the B . . . In Be The Best!
All found in your heart of gold, and your life's quest . . .
For Army Strong is your life's song!
Brendan, You Rock . . . all night long . . .
And when we gaze upon his heart, we feel the burn!
And now more Steel has so been forged!
The Bear! PFC Bryan Dilberian a 10th Mountain Man . . .
A Brooklyn Man, a Real Beastie Boy who stands!
A question asked, "in New York, what are you putting in that water man"?
This Christmas and Hanukkah, remember all of those men and women . . .
Who upon them this our Nation do so depend . . .
Who with hearts of Steel, all for us so live and die . . .
As across this nation families cry . . .
Separated by death and distance, who this holiday season so miss this . . .
And men like Rocco, who with hearts of Steel . . .
Who to all of us so reveal!
That word Hero, Brendan Marrocco . . .
Staten Island Steel!